

Asheville City Council
Planning and Economic Development Committee

2:30 p.m., September 9, 2009
Economic Development Office Conference Room

Minutes

Present: Councilwoman Robin Cape, Chair; Vice-Mayor Jan Davis

Staff: Gary Jackson, Sam Powers, Judy Daniel, Shannon Tuch, Nikki Reid, Sasha Vrtunski

The Planning and Economic Development Committee met on September 9, 2009, at 29 Haywood Street. Chair Cape called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the August 12, 2009, meeting were approved as written.

2. Unfinished Business

Downtown Master Plan Implementation

Sasha Vrtunski, project manager, gave the update. She reported that Planning staff is moving forward with updating the UDO and downtown design guidelines. There has been a call issued to the community for participation in an Implementation Task Force, and to date 54 responses have been received to fill the 35 positions. Staff is working to reach out to the community to fill in any identifiable gaps in representation.

RFP Modeling

Sam Powers, Economic Development Director, gave the report. Stephanie Monson is continuing to work with RENCI on RFP modeling, and should be in a position by next meeting to present a model for committee review. The goal of the modeling project continues to be illustrating the difference between speculation and possibility so that the public can most accurately respond to the project.

3. Updates

2025 Plan Implementation Matrix

Judy Daniel, Planning Director, gave the update. Alyssa Dack, summer intern with the Office of Economic Development, produced the document. Ms. Dack's overview of the implementation matrix is attached.) Ms. Daniel commented that most of the major goals of the 2025 Plan have been incorporated into the Downtown Master Plan just adopted by City Council. She also reinforced that it is important to differentiate between a vision document and a strategic document. And that systematically scheduling implementation updates is a valuable tool for goal-setting for both staff and the community.

The PED Committee recommended that the 2025 Plan Implementation Matrix be moved forward for full Council review.

4. New Business

Air Rights Policy Review

Nikki Reid, Real Estate Manager, led the air rights policy review by narrating the attached powerpoint presentation. Discussion ensued regarding the issues raised in Ms. Reid's presentation. The Committee directed staff to continue researching air rights policies, and to develop an appropriate policy for Asheville.

Regulations Governing Signage on Vehicles and the Use of Portable Storage Containers

Shannon Tuch, Assistant Planning Director, gave a draft presentation of a review of the current ordinance and enforcement program governing signage on vehicles. Ms. Tuch will be presenting the finalized review to full Council on September 22, 2009. This review will attempt to demonstrate to City Council when and under what circumstances enforcement actions are necessary, explain the relationship between signs on vehicles and other sign standards, and identify other options available to businesses requiring additional signage.

Regarding the use of portable containers for signage, staff is continuing to look at standards in other cities, and will report back these benchmarks to the Committee at a later date.

Southern Conference Basketball Tournament 2012 Bid

Sam Powers reported that the Vice Mayor and staff from Civic Center have been contacted by the Southern Conference to gauge community interest in developing a bid to the Southern Conference for their 2012 basketball tournament. Mr. Powers indicated that this is a great opportunity for community partnerships and is an economic development initiative with a \$2M annual impact. PED agreed to ask staff to continue exploration and due diligence. The bid will eventually be presented to full Council.

Fresh Market Parking Lot

Vice Mayor Davis raised his concerns about the new landscaping requirements in the Fresh Market parking lot, due to the remodeling efforts, and the negative impact on customers accustomed to a different traffic pattern. Staff will follow up.

5. Presentations and Public Comment

There were no presentations or public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.